

Artist Commons and Appropriation by Local Government in Seoul, Korea

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Abstract:

Urban commons is an emerging concept focused on the social production and collaborations in a metropolitan setting as an alternative both for market and state in this neoliberal urbanism. This paper investigates the artist movements in Seoul, their characteristics, conflicts, appropriations, and the commoning processes. After discussing the urban commons-related concepts and synthesizing them as a system, it examines the repercussions and implications of the oasis project, the artist squatting and Mullae art village, the spontaneous artist community practice movements in detail. Finally, it investigates the appropriation process of the tactic urban commons into government urban policies, or strategic urban commons and discusses the emergence of culture-led urban gentrification in detail.

Keywords: urban commons, tactic and strategic commons, appropriation, gentrification

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I. INTRODUCTION

In this era of the threats of neo-liberalism, neither state nor market no longer can be an alternative, commons, which is neither public nor private rather than networks, provides new types of collaborations emerges as an alternative for everyday life. It is well known that the reservoir of urban commons can lessen the socio-spatial exclusions (Jermyn 2004), enhance place belongings, fulfillment, and conviviality in the urban communities (McQuilten and White, 2016). Spontaneous art communities in nature resist the established cultural power and try to provide new alternatives for urban commons. The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The paper investigates the meanings and connotations of the strategic commons and tactic commons and analyzes cases of art communities in terms of resistance and construction of the tactic commons. It criticizes government policies especially urban regeneration policies and gentrification process, which only enable capitals and so-called the public to appropriate urban commons. In conclusion, the paper suggests reevaluation for the art community movements in Seoul and methodologies for recovering urban commons.

II. COMEDY (NOT TRAGEDY) OF THE COMMONS

2.1 Tragedy of the Commons –

Biologist Garrett Hardin(1968), explained how shared environmental resources are overused and eventually depleted, compared shared resources to a common grazing pasture, everyone with rights to the pasture grazes as many animals as possible, acting in self-interest for the greatest short-term personal gain. Eventually, they use up all the grass in the pasture; the shared resource is depleted and no longer useful. use of "commons" as a term connoting a shared resource..

2.2. Comedy of the Commons–

Carol M. Rose(1986), The countereffect of the tragedy of the anti-commons, the increased usefulness of a resource as the result of many individuals using it, individuals contributing knowledge and content for the good of the community rather than extracting resources for their own personal gain, which means that good outcome and successful capitalism, exemplified by the popular website, Wikipedia.

2.3. Governing the Commons–

Elinor Ostrom (1990) investigated the Lobstermen in Maine Province, in the United states. Caring for the commons had to be a multiple task, organized from the ground up and shaped to cultural norms, discussed face to face and based on trust. employing game theory: predict the behavior of people faced with limited resources. Common pool resources include many forests, fisheries, oil fields, grazing lands, and irrigation systems. societies have developed diverse institutional arrangements for managing natural resources and avoiding ecosystem collapse.

The multifaceted nature of human–ecosystem interaction and argues against any singular "panacea" for individual social-ecological system problems. Contribution to the development of Solidarity economy, open source programming networks, open value networks, and lastly peer production-

According to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's collaborative trilogy of Empire (2000), Multitude (2004), and Commonwealth (2009), in the 20th century the world order based on the sovereignty of nation-states replaced by "imperial sovereignty," or empire, a transnational and biopolitical capitalism. They argue that "public" and "private" simply connote two different means of the same end, the reproduction of capital. suggestively argue that "the metropolis is to the multitude what the factory was to the industrial city."

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The Common is historically linked with the rise of industrial capitalism, 1) the natural environment, its resources and the products they yield; and 2) the products of social interaction, such as codes, languages, affects, information and other forms of knowledge, wholly immanent to biopolitical practice, global city as a "biopolitical city," a collective space of productive, life-or-death struggle against biopower, or the coercive management of everyday life.

The characteristics of the commons can be described as follows:

1. The commons is produced, not given,
2. There is no commons without community,
3. Resistance and construction are key characteristics of the commons. Goods can be converted into the commons through struggles resistance. The commons can be an alternative mode of production through solidarity and reciprocity.
4. The commons is a system comprised of common goods, community, and communing.

2.4. Strategic & Tactic Commons–

de Certeau(1984) explained that Strategies are institutions and structures of power who are the "producers" existing politics, economy, and scientific rationality created in modern times basis for producing relations with outside competitors, clients, goals, objects pursue metropolitan-centered globalization: 'creative city', 'culture-nomics', Exerted by state, municipality, corporation, the proprietor, a scientific enterprises. By contrast, Tactics pursue ecological community in local setting, individuals are "consumers" or "poachers," acting in accordance with, or against, environments defined by strategies by using "tactics". In everyday practice they are unstable, peripheral, and highly mobile. Everyday life works by a process of poaching on the territory of others, using the rules and products that already exist in culture in a way that is influenced, but never wholly determined, by those rules and products.

Utilizing these concepts of strategies and tactics, strategic commons can be defined as the institutions and social system for the functioning the commons, which produces platforms and appropriates the created wealth by tactic commons Based on place [reverts the temporal relations to spatial relations], for example, urban cultural policies and urban regeneration policies can be classified as strategic commons. Tactic commons are alternative value practice, produce collective symbolic capital, contributes for community conviviality, Based on temporal relations. Art and cultural movements, squatting can be classified as tactic commons.

Metropolis is a social factory, where the two commons sometimes collides and cooperates each other in making urban landscapes, generated by the strategies of governments, corporations, and other institutional bodies who produce things like maps that describe the city as a unified whole.

III. MULLAE ART VILLAGE VS. CREATIVE CITY POLICY OF SMG

3.1 The commoning process of the tactic commons–

The characteristics of art making: the precarity of artists, peripherality, poor institutional support, collective nature of

art producing process, expedite the networking and solidarity of artists, sources of urban commons. Art as a event accumulated technologies and socio-economic strata, collectively produced rather than a material created by one particular person, social nature of art. The barriers for urban space and accessibilities. The strength of the property right of urban space in Korea (building owners are above the god) architecture = business = high rent). Artists try to accommodate the empty space: squatting in search for autonomy, freedom, resistance, solidarity, and communing. The proposed scheme is tested using ordinarily image processing. From the simulation of the experiment results, we can draw to the conclusion that this method is robust to many kinds of watermark images.

3.2 Mullae Art Village–

This section briefly describes the place history of Mullae-dong. Textile factories and a residential area for their workers during the Japanese colonial era, The 1960s, as part of Korean government's rapid industrial growth plan, it was transformed into steel mill factories, In the 1980s, Seoul Metropolitan Government pushed (heavy) industrial facilities out of Seoul boundary, decline of industrial functions in Mullae-dong, The 1990s: emptied spots being filled with apartment complexes and shopping malls, The early 2000s: Groups of indie artists began to build their work studios and coexist with the declining steel factories and shops.

Project Space Lab 39(2007-2015) contribute to making art community and getting closer to the residents by opening exhibitions, performance, parties, seminars, meetings, forums, lectures, cafes, kitchens, and libraries, The commoning of space: The rooftop project "The City is ours"(2007.4-2009.11), The rooftop was a waste dump area(negative commons), converted to gallery(positive commons): space for realization of creativity and communications, Various exhibitions and workshops starting from Pagode de Consomation, Robot garden, Ad Libitum, Lab39 as a common place □ realize desire not by possession(private ownership) but by sharing.

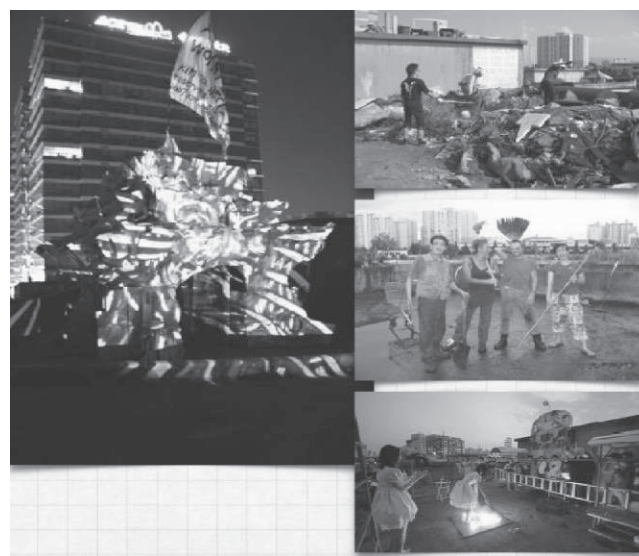


Figure -1 Project Space Lab 39

3.3 The commoning Process–

1. The commoning of art: Boundaryless art project@Mullae, Mullae art festival(2007.06), collective art programs such as open studio, public art, culture and art education, the process of making art for everyone, especially for local residents, The transformation of art to the commons not to goods for markets .
2. The commoning of networks: "... the happy encounters in the metropolis produce social body, which is more capable than individual body separately..."[Negri•Hardt, 2009, 356], common wealth which cannot be reduced as agglomerations of huge goods. The rooftops full of waste dump became space for communications and exchanges, the waste became new environmental sculptures. The blurring boundaries for production and reproduction, art and life, art and not-art, labor transforms into the process of biopolitics: the artists in Mullae-dong both produce pieces individually and (re)produce networks collectively.

3.4 The tactic commons: resistance and construction–

Mullae Art Village (Lab 39) 2007-present, Lab 39: Spontaneously congregated artist group, heterogeneous interests and perspectives, focused on everyday artistic practices. The implications are as follows:

1. practicing rather than demanding, self-referencing & constructing rather than trying to change outer objects
2. stir up the problems of artists working space in Korea: show-up artists' rights and capabilities
3. Lab39 is more focusing on construction, create new discourse space
4. collectively reproducing their lives and creating new types of wealth, the commons under the principles of autonomy, expanded networking, and horizontal collaborations
5. In the metropolis as a social factory, artists create their own pieces individually, at the same time, they collectively produce networks: arts based on networking = life-forming

3.5 The strategic commons: appropriation of artists' outcomes–

The Seoul Creative Space Project by SMG(2008): reduced the movements as one element of urban regeneration policies or one resource for urban tourism precinct. utilized the changing image of the places and intervene the process by art and cultural policies, mobilized the urban space as a social factory which articulated the cultural practices of urban residents(labor) into urban competitiveness, During the process, the tactic commons transformed into strategic commons and being appropriated by them(from Mullae art village to Mullae Creative Space), artists were displaced by the force of the established cultural power, gentrification, and tourification.

The squatting and Lab 39 was a autonomy with discipline, converted as Art Factory regulated by bureaucratic control [the public owns the space and manage artists' time: time transformed into space], spontaneous art space has become

hip and hot places full of restaurants, wine bars, and sushi bars, rising rent, conflicts .

3.6 The strategic commons by SMG and gentrification–

Make planning, compass the whole city, measure others[othering], exert power to reconstruct like Haussmann's urban planning [vs. tactics by Lab 39 are everyday practices]. Creative city plan, Culture-nomics are typical strategic commons, trying to appropriate the collectively created common wealth by artists and local residents, produce places of excellence(Harvey, 2012) and symbolic capital [vs. artists' various community activities, squatting, art projects are typical tactic commons]. The strategic commons are only possible when they appropriate the tactic commons, the symbiotic relationships: artists' tactic practices to urban cultural planning is like host to parasites, collaborations and collides/ conflicts and cooperation between the different value practices.

From Lab 39 to Art factory: "creative art platform", "civic cultural space", "key urban regeneration place utilizing recycling", art-led urban regeneration by appropriating volunteering artists' tactic commons, Objectivation of artists, distorting art community, gentrification. 150 workshops and about 300 artists in Mullae-dong now. After the culture-nomics policy implementation including art factories and new development plan, Increasing land price, rent, and displacement of residents and artists, Mushrooming cafes, restaurants, bakeries, and other commercial facilities, The appropriation of tactic commons by strategic commons. As a result, Mullae-dong has lost district features and the cultural hollowing out and, gentrification process has started.

IV. CONCLUSION

SMG's strategic planning tries to appropriate the socially produced common wealth, the urban as social factory producing the commons, transform (artists') collective activities into collective symbolic capital, commodification of the urban. As landscape changes, artists created distinct scenes from dilapidated old industrial areas, full of noise, dust, and bad smell [squat-commons, trying to expand common sphere], intervention by public sector(municipal government) and capitals, distortion of space based on fabricated image, gentrification, worsen the precarious status of artists. All in all, there's a need for harmonious interactions between tactic and strategic commons and providing both psychological and material safety net for the precarious of artists.

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